

West Bengal: Birbhum, 28 Aug. 1966, Basak 594 (CAL); Darjeeling (6500 ft), 5.vii.1956, Chatterjee 24 (CAL); Darjeeling (4000 ft) 28.vii.1870, Clarke 12243 (CAL); Howrah 26.viii.1964, Bennet 969 (CAL); Malda, 1966, Dutta 350 (CAL).

Purulia, 20.iv.1968, Malik 546 (CAL); West Dinajpur (Chopra), 22.viii.1995, Mitra 2449 (CAL).

Bangladesh: Jessore, 1874, Clarke 21811 (CAL).

Myanmar: Upper Burma, ?.vii.1888, Khan 130 (CAL).

Nepal: 1951, Williams 5202 (CAL).

Trichosanthes tricuspidata Lour. var. *strigosa* var. nov. differs from the related taxa *T. tricuspidata* Lour. var. *tricuspidata* and *T. tricuspidata* Lour. var. *tomentosa* (Heyne ex Clarke) Kumari by the presence of strigose hairs

on the lower laminar surface all over, densely or only on the nerve sparsely.

Distribution: Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Meghalaya, NEFA, Orissa, Tamil Nadu & West Bengal, India; Bangladesh, Myanmar, Nepal.

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39. A NEW RECORD OF *THRIXSPERMUM MERGUENSE* (HOOK.F.) KUNTZE (ORCHIDACEAE) FROM NICOBAR ISLANDS

The genus *Thrixspermum* Lour. with an estimated number of species between 100 to 150 (Seidenfaden, 1992) in the world is represented by only eight species in India (Karthikeyan *et al.*, 1989; Sathish Kumar and Manilal, 1994; Seidenfaden, 1992) after *T. album* is considered conspecific with *T. trichoglottis* by Holttum and with the relationship of this taxon to a series of taxa, especially the classical *T. hystrix*, remaining unresolved.

T. merguense (Hook.f.) Kuntze, hitherto known to be distributed from Myanmar (Tenasserim) eastwards to Taiwan and the Philippines, as well as Sumatra, Java and Krakatau, is being reported here from Nicobar Is. after the identification of the specimen is confirmed on the basis of the illustrations and literature (Seidenfaden, 1992). With this new report, the total number of species so far known to occur in Andaman and Nicobar Is. is three, the other two being *T. trichoglottis* and *T. amplexicaule*. A brief description of the orchid

species is provided below to facilitate easy collection and identification in the field.

Thrixspermum merguense (Hook.f.) Kuntze, Rev. Gen 2: 682, 1891.

Sarcochilus merguense Hook.f. t F1. Brit. India 6: 401 1890.

Small epiphytic plants; stem up to 1 cm long, clothed with the imbricating bases of the distichous leaves. Roots wiry. Leaves up to 3.5 x 1.0 cm, retuse. Inflorescence almost as long as leaves; rachis 1 cm long. Bracts closely arranged, triangular, acute, up to 1 mm long. Dorsal sepal up to 2.5 mm long. Petals slightly smaller. Lip with tufts of hairs at the distal end, and one tuft centrally located; the side lobes broadly triangular. Column up to 1 mm long, narrowing towards the base. Fruit not seen.

Specimens examined: Andaman-Nicobar Islands: Great Nicobar island, 41 km from Campbell Bay on north-south road along the Galathea river, 7.iv.1995, Coll. V. Maina and B. K. Sinha 20599 (PBL).

Distribution: India (Gt. Nicobar Island), Myanmar, Taiwan, Philippines, Sumatra, Java and Malaya.

Conservation: As the species is very rare in India and restricted to Gt. Nicobar, steps should be taken for its conservation in view of various developmental activities taking place in the island territory of late.

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